

Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER

September 1991



Volume 4, Number 9

A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

1991/1992 Literacy Cost-Shared Projects

A total of 42 literacy projects for B.C., cost-shared between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat, has been announced for the 1991/1992 fiscal year. The announcement was made on September 8, International Literacy Day, by federal Multiculturalism and Citizenship Minister Gerry Weiner and MAETT Minister Peter Dueck.

The 42 projects will receive approximately 1.38 million dollars in federal/provincial funds. The total for 1990/1991 was approximately 1.35 million dollars. This is the fifth year of cost-shared project funding.

The projects fall into eight categories: coordination and information sharing; learning materials; outreach; pilot projects; public awareness; operational funding; research; and other.

The target groups are: English as a second language; family; native; offenders/parolees; northern province; province-wide; special needs; tutors; women; workers; other.

The 42 projects are listed below according to community college regions in the province. A "community partner" is the agency responsible for delivering the project.

CAMOSUN COLLEGE REGION

Math Literacy Pilot (Victoria)

Community Partner: Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development

Resource Forum (Victoria)

Community Partner: Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development

First Nations Literacy Resource Centre (Brentwood Bay)

Community Partner: Saanich Indian School Board

Literacy Research Pertaining to Adults and Youth Confined in Provincial Correctional Centres (Victoria)

Community Partner: The John Howard Society of B.C.

Project REACH (Victoria)

Community Partner: School District #62 (Sooke)

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CAPILANO COLLEGE REGION

Literacy Materials Committee (North Vancouver)

Community Partner: Adult Literacy
Contact Centre

**Video/Workshop: Using SARAW
to Integrate the Physically Disabled
Students (North Vancouver)**

Community Partner: The Neil Squire
Foundation

CARIBOO COLLEGE REGION

Prison Tutors (Kamloops)

Community Partner: Kamloops and
District Elizabeth Fry Society

COLLEGE OF NEW CALEDONIA REGION

**The Next Step: Building
Community Partnerships for
Literacy; A Northern Conference
(Houston)**

Community Partner: Project Literacy
Houston

Special Needs Training (Prince George)

Community Partner: Vancouver
School Board

Partners-for-Literacy Cooking Project (Prince George)

Community Partner: Northern Family
Health Society

Native Literacy Promotion (Burns Lake)

Community Partner: Lake Babine
Band

Video Disk Development Project (Vanderhoof)

Community Partner: Yinke Dene
Language Institute

Mackenzie Project (Mackenzie)

Community Partner: Mackenzie
Public Library

DOUGLAS COLLEGE REGION

**B.C. Book Voyage Publication (New
Westminster)**

Community Partner: Literacy B.C.
Society

Tutor Support for Prison Literacy Program (New Westminster)

Community Partner: B.C.
Correctional Institute for Women

ESL Literacy Tutoring Project (New Westminster)

Community Partner: Burnaby
Multicultural Society

EAST KOOTENAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE REGION

Native Literacy Project Read (Invermere)

Community Partner: Columbia Lake
Indian Band

FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE REGION

**Helping Your Child Succeed in
School: Reading and Study Skills
Series for Parents (Abbotsford)**

Community Partner: School District
#32

Prison Tutor Training (Abbotsford)

Community Partner: John Howard
Society

First Nations Tutor Training (Mission)

Community Partner: Coqualeetza
Cultural Centre

Literacy Community Outreach Worker (Abbotsford)

Community Partner: Fraser Valley

East Literacy Association

KWANTLEN COLLEGE REGION

Tutor Mathematics Resource Manual (Langley)

Community Partner: Langley School
District #35

MALASPINA COLLEGE REGION

**Instructional Package of Self-Paced
Learning Materials for Literacy at
all Levels in the Workplace (Powell
River)**

Community Partner: MacMillan
Bloedel

Community/Industry Networking for Literacy (Nanaimo)

Community Partner: Nanaimo
Literacy Association

NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE REGION

Discovery Centre (Campbell River)

Community Partner: School District
#72

NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE REGION

May I Read Here? A Community Pilot Project (Fort St. John)

Community Partner: Fort St. John
Literacy Society

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE REGION

Regional Literacy Resource Centre (Terrace)

Community Partner: Project Literacy
Terrace

Literacy Communication Research Project (Houston)

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Community Partner: Project Literacy
Houston

Literacy Kitimat (Kitimat)

Community Partner: School District
#80

OKANAGAN COLLEGE REGION

Native Literacy Handbook (Salmon
Arm)

Community Partner: Native Adult
Education Resource Centre

Aboriginal Literacy Training Event
(Salmon Arm)

Community Partner: Native Adult
Education Resource Centre

Native Women in the Americas
(Salmon Arm)

Community Partner: Native Adult
Education Resource Centre

OK PLUS - Okanagan College
Personal Learning and Upgrading
Skills (Vernon)

Community Partner: John Howard
Society of the North Okanagan/
Kootenay Region of B.C.

The Copying of the Product
Hyperware (Kelowna)

Community Partner: Simon Fraser
University (Okanagan Campus)

Health Care Literacy Project
(Salmon Arm)

Community Partner: North Okanagan
Health Unit

SELKIRK COLLEGE REGION:

Literacy for the West Kootenay
(Castlegar)

Community Partner: Project Literacy
West Kootenay

Learners Talking to Learners:

Regional Learner Events (Silverton)

Community Partner: [An advisory
committee]

VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE REGION

Adult Literacy Contact Centre
(Vancouver)

Community Partner: Adult Basic
Education Association of B.C.

Literacy Textbook on Global Issues
and Training Workshops for
Teachers (Vancouver)

Community Partner: Co-development
Canada

"Voices" Magazine (Burnaby)

Community Partner: Lower Mainland
Society for Literacy and Employment

OPEN LEARNING AGENCY

Adult Basic Skills Development
Program in Non-traditional
Settings (B.C.)

Community Partner: Vancouver
School Board ☐

Adult Literacy Contact Centre
Newsletter

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Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8
1-800-663-1293 Toll-free in B.C.
684-0624 Lower Mainland
684-8520 Facsimile

The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a
project of the Adult Basic Education
Association of B.C. and is jointly
funded by the Ministry of Advanced
Education, Training and Technology;
and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your
literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We
reserve the right to edit written
submissions for the newsletter.

The newsletter is published monthly
and distributed on the last working day
of the month. It is available free of
charge to any individual or agency
upon request.



Reading Levels in Forest Industry

A pilot study initiated by the
Council of Forest Industries
(COFI) of B.C. and the IWA
(International Woodworkers of
America) Canada on the
communication skills of
employees in B.C. sawmills was
presented this month in
Nanaimo.

Gary Johncox, Vice-President,
Human Resources, MacMillan
Bloedel Ltd., and a member of
the steering committee for the
study, reported on A
*Preliminary Study of Job-
Related Communications in
British Columbia Sawmills* on
September 11 at a workshop,
"Literacy in the Workplace,"
organized by the Downtown
Literacy Office of Literacy
Nanaimo.

Johncox was the principal
speaker of a nine-person panel
which included:

Jamie Brennan, Access Services,
Malaspina College
Ron Dowbysh, Manager of Corporate
Security, MacMillan Bloedel Ltd.
Dave Long, President, Canadian
Union of Public Employees,
Local 1004
Lee MacDonald, Area Supervisor,
Ministry of Advanced Education,
Training and Technology
Bob Morrison, President, Greater
Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce

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"Reading Levels" from page 3

Gary Pharness, Workplace Language Program, City of Vancouver
Christina Pikios, Consultant,
Workplace Training Systems,
Open Learning Agency
Audrey Watson, Literacy Nanaimo

The audience, which numbered about 40 and was from Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, included: learners; workers, union officials and managers in forestry and other industries; instructors and administrators in adult basic education and the public school system; and representatives of provincial ministries.

The COFI / IWA study, which was funded by the National Literacy Secretariat, was designed by Job Communication Project Research of Vancouver and conducted between 1989 and 1990. Its aim was "to see if there was a fit between the level of written workplace materials in British Columbia sawmills and the comprehension skills of employees who need to read them." 227 salaried and hourly employees from eight sawmills in different parts of B.C. participated in the pilot.

Four instruments were used to collect data for the study:

- ❖ a custom-designed, 52-question structured interview guide on "Background Information, Language Use, Education and Certification, Communication on the Job, and Training Courses and Needs"
 - ❖ the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Revised (Dunn and Dunn, 1981)
 - ❖ Standard Progressive Matrices (Raven, Court and Raven, 1986)
 - ❖ five cloze passages taken from actual instructional, informational, safety and health documents in use in B.C. mills. The passages were rated in reading level from mid-grade four to post-university.
- Johncox reported that the study "guaranteed confidentiality" of participants but because of some "refusals to participate" an actual random sample was not achieved.
- Some of the study's findings are:
- ❖ 56% of the tested employees were deemed as having problems understanding written materials judged to be at the mid-grade four level.
 - ❖ 61.2% of the respondents indicated they were born in Canada.
 - ❖ Employees seem to cope with the apparent lack of comprehension. There is no direct evidence linking reading comprehension to job performance.
 - ❖ Employees who want training have a strong preference for community-based settings with outside teaching staff.
 - ❖ Employees want employer support in terms of time and cost of training.
- Some of Johncox's conclusions from the study are:
- ❖ "We need to rewrite a good deal of our instructional material" to fit employees' reading comprehension levels.
 - ❖ "We need to ensure that community-based adult basic education facilities are available in our communities."
 - ❖ "We must raise our hiring standards by doing more pre-employment testing and selecting candidates with higher academic achievement levels."
- Bert Hawyrsh, Vice-President, Occupational Safety and Health, COFI, and Chair of the study's steering committee, says, despite the title, *A Preliminary Study...*, no further research on the topic is planned at present. "We pretty well have the picture," he says, "but the study still needs careful interpretation to deal with what might appear to be contradictions in the findings."
- A summary of the study was published in May, 1991 and selectively distributed in September. □

MCL Seeks Feedback on Policy Document

The Movement for Canadian Literacy is soliciting feedback from the literacy field on a document it has published aimed at forming a unified literacy policy for Canada.

Organizing Adult Literacy and Basic Education in Canada: A Policy and Practice Discussion Document, "was written by Joyce White, MCL Project Coordinator and Susan Hoddinott, Chair, MCL Policy Committee, with contributions from the MCL Board of Directors and Policy Committee members, and the support of the National Literacy Secretariat.

The purpose of the document is to:

"... address the need for a coordinated policy for Literacy in Canada, a policy which would ensure that there is equitable access to quality basic education for all adults who may need or desire it.

It is hoped that the document will promote discussion, provide a focus for Literacy advocacy and, through improving organization and practice, narrow the gap between adult Literacy education and all other areas of education."

The 46-page document was "developed through a process combining secondary research, advisory committee expertise and consultation, and discussion with Literacy educators and students."

The Project Advisory committee members were:

Dr. John Comings, Vice-President,
World Education,
Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.
Dr. Francis E. Kazemek, Department
of Education, Eastern
Washington University, Cheney,
Washington, U.S.A.
Isabel Madeira-Voss, Literacy
Division, Province of Nova
Scotia
Alan Wells, Director, Adult Literacy
and Basic Skills Unit, London,
England

The general principles of good practice according to MCL are, in brief:

- clear program aims
- sound teaching methodology
- learner-centred programs
- universal free access
- student support services
- qualified and suitable staff
- appropriate facilities
- variety of materials
- program accountability

Some specific recommendations in the document are that:

❖ Each province and territory should meet the need of 2% of the potential adult literacy and adult basic education population in the first year of a five year plan. MCL estimates that for B.C. this first year expenditure would be \$30,009,600.00 (1991 dollars).

❖ In each province or territory "there should be a full-time regional literacy coordinator for every 100,000 adults."

❖ "Teaching and learning must be active and dynamic and must not rely on any single limited approach to the teaching of reading or any single learning package."

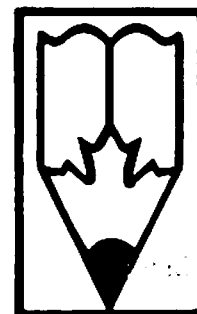
❖ "The salaries and benefits of of program coordinators, teachers, specialists, and support staff in adult Literacy programs should be equal to those provided for similar positions in all other areas of the provincial educational system."

❖ "Programs which utilize the assistance of volunteers should define criteria and establish procedures for the selection of volunteers and should provide appropriate initial and on-going training."

The *Discussion Document* is available from the Adult Literacy Contact Centre while supplies last.

For further information, contact:

The Movement for Canadian Literacy
880 Wellington Street
Suite 500
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 6K7
(613) 563-2464 ☐



First Northern Conference Set for Houston

A northern B.C. community which has spearheaded a drive to heighten awareness of literacy needs in local industry will be the site next spring of B.C.'s first northern literacy conference.

"The Next Step: Building Community Partnerships for Literacy," will be held March 26-28, 1992 in Houston. The conference is a 1991/1992 cost-shared project between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat. Additional funding was received from the provincial Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism, Nechako region.

The conference is the result of more than a year of planning by three local Project Literacy groups (Houston, Smithers, and Terrace), two colleges and three levels of government - municipal, provincial and federal. Planning committee chairperson Catherine Wishart, Regional Manager, Nechako District, College of New Caledonia, Vanderhoof, says the goals of the conference are to develop a strategic plan for a northern B.C. literacy network, and address employment-oriented literacy issues.

Planning committee members include:

Brenda Anderson, Branch Manager, Employment and Immigration Canada, Houston

Sandi Lavallie, district representative, Project Literacy Houston; Literacy B.C. board member; Northwest Community College

Bob Jackman, Regional Development Liaison Officer, Bulkley-Nechako, Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism

Barb Lyotier, Houston Chamber of Commerce

Stephen Threadkell, Policy Analyst, Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism

Catherine Wishart, College of New Caledonia

Three local learners have also been on the planning committee, but all have recently resigned -- one to return to school and two others for employment. The conference will feature learners' workshops and learner response panels to keynote speakers.

Wishart says confirmed workshop topics to date are:

- ❖ board effectiveness
- ❖ developing community organizations
- ❖ training for trainers
- ❖ workplace-oriented projects
- ❖ advocacy

❖ recruitment and barriers

Names of keynote speakers have yet to be announced.

Anderson says community groups and industry in Houston (population approximately 4,000) have "really pulled together" to make the conference a success. Two of the area's major employers, Northwood Pulp and Timber and Houston Forest Products, have "made a really strong commitment to the event."

The Development, Trade and Tourism Ministry, Anderson says, "got involved in the conference because it's an economic issue. We're very typical resource-based communities," she explains. "In five years, there will be major concerns within these communities about employment. We will have a labour force unable to remain competitive because it won't have the necessary skills; employers will require higher skill levels."

She says, "the communities share problems of access to training programs and funding. The goal is for participants to come away from the conference with tangible plans to increase community and industry commitment to literacy training."

For more information contact:

Bonny Hawley
Conference Coordinator
Phone: 845-3277 (Houston) ☐

Latest ABE Articulation Update

The *Provincial Update on ABE* (Adult Basic Education) *Articulation*, 6th edition, has been published by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. The document is an annual summary of the work of the provincial ABE Articulation Steering Committee and its subsidiary working committees, made up of representatives from each B.C. community college.

ABE articulation is the process which facilitates the transfer of students from one educational institution to another, sets course requirements for diplomas and certificates, and develops

guidelines for course content identified for different levels of certification. There are 20 steering committee members representing 15 college regions and the Open College, and seven working committees (one each for English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Computer Studies, Career Preparation and Fundamental Level).

The update contains all the revisions to generic course outlines and the course equivalency charts, as determined by steering committee members, as well as any overall changes in the policy or regulations governing the process.

Gwen Armstrong, Coordinator of ABE and English as a Second Language for the Ministry, says multiple copies of the *Update* were distributed to each college in September through its steering committee member. Copies have also been sent to Employment and Immigration Canada offices throughout the province.

Additional copies may be obtained from:

Joan Connors
Chairperson, ABE Steering Committee
College of New Caledonia
Phone: (Prince George) 562-2131

Gwen Armstrong
Coordinator, ABE and ESL
Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology
Phone: (Victoria) 387-6176 ☐

Literacy Media Blitz

The Literacy Public Awareness Campaign launched an electronic media blitz this month around International Literacy Day, September 8. 30-second advertisements citing the Adult Literacy Contact Centre toll-free phone number were seen and heard regularly on television and radio throughout B.C. from September 9-21.

The television advertisement was targeted for potential learners ("You can do it. You can learn to read") and was aired during the BCTV Newshour.

The radio advertisements were for two audiences: potential learners ("Not long ago I'd break out into a cold sweat just filling out a form"); and the general public ("The nice thing about radio is you don't have to read it"). They were aired on four stations in Vancouver (CFMI, CKNW, CKWX, and CJVB) and on over 90 other stations throughout B.C., from Fort Nelson to Fernie.

McKim Advertising (Vancouver), which has the contract for the Awareness Campaign, secured numerous donations for the editing of the television ad and the creation of the two radio advertisements:

CORPORATE DONATIONS

Dick and Roger's Sound Studio Ltd.
Gastown Post and Transfer
Total Graphics

PERSONAL DONATIONS

Dick Abbott - voice for learner audience, radio
Jim Conrad - voice of announcer, radio
Susan Henry - voice for general audience, radio

The same television and radio ads are scheduled to be run again on the same stations during November and the first week of December, 1991, and during January and February, 1992.

The Literacy Public Awareness Campaign is the second phase of a B.C. literacy cost-shared project in the Vancouver Community College region. ☐

Gzowski to Speak at Alberta Conference

Registration is still open for the 10th anniversary celebration and conference of The Alberta Association for Adult Literacy (AAAL) to be held November 21-23 in Lethbridge.

Keynote speakers at the conference, "Voyage into Literacy," include CBC *Morningside* host, author and literacy fundraiser Peter Gzowski; Senator Joyce Fairbairn; and Edmonton educational consultant Brian Staples.

Scheduled workshop and symposia categories include: workplace literacy, aboriginal literacy, student/learner interests, strategies for tutors and coordinators, and adult basic education instructional strategies.

The intended audience for the conference includes literacy coordinators, instructors, volunteers, learners, tutors, researchers, counsellors, and administrators.

To register, contact:

Caroline Wagenaar
Alberta Association for Adult
Literacy
Lethbridge Community College
3000 College Drive South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 1L6
Phone: (403) 329-7203 ☐

ABEABC Call for Conference Proposals

Organizers have issued a call for workshop presentation proposals on the topic of "Integration," the theme of the Annual General Meeting and Conference of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. April 1-4, 1992 in Harrison Hot Springs.

Conference Chair Nita Jacob, Coquitlam School District Continuing Education, says the topic might include, for example, "cross curriculum, colleges and schools, and special needs." Jacob says the Association is seeking ideas for presenters, and suggestions for workshop topics.

The conference will be sponsored by the Lower Mainland School Districts.

To offer a proposal or find out more about the conference, contact:

Nita Jacob
Coquitlam Continuing Education
Phone: 936-4261
Fax: 936-6594 ☐

Workforce Education Event

A consultation on workforce education partnerships featuring representatives from business, labour and government will be held at Le Meridien Hotel in Vancouver from 2:00-4:30 p.m. on October 15.

The consultation, on the topic, "Educational Needs of Workers," is an event by "Partnerships at Work," one of the 1990/91 literacy cost-shared projects.

The panel of speakers includes:

Wendy Carter, Regional Director,
Department of Secretary of State
and Multiculturalism and
Citizenship Canada
Keith Gray, Vice President, Business
Council of B.C.
Bert Hawrysh, Vice-President,
Occupational Safety and Health,
Council of Forest Industries
Joanne Linzey, Executive Director
and CAO, ABC Canada
Jim Lippert, Executive Director, B.C.
Construction Industry Skills
Improvement Council (SkillPlan)

Workshops will follow the speakers' presentations.

To register (by October 8) contact:

Shirley Abrams
Phone: 263-5922 (Vancouver)
or:
Florence Pieronek (Vancouver)
Phone: 732-9745 ☐